



# WARE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Ware Learning Community,

Happy Friday! Hope this communication finds you well and enjoying this beautiful end of summer weather! With almost three weeks of school under our belt, Nurse Jennifer Knight and I wanted to share with you what is occurring within the schools as we work to manage COVID.

Since we have returned to school there have been 18 positive cases with 26 close contacts within the District. Cases and close contacts are added to the District Dashboard daily ([www.wareps.org/covid19/dashboard](http://www.wareps.org/covid19/dashboard)) to give you the most recent counts within each building.

Since the start of the pandemic, we have utilized several mitigating strategies to help in the battle against COVID. Wearing a mask, washing hands, cleaning & spraying surfaces, along with social distancing when we can have been our standard procedure. Now we can add to the mix of mitigating strategies vaccinations for individuals 12 and up for families who so chose. Our youngest of children, ages 11 and down, are not currently afforded this layer of protection.

Another layer of protection is Pooled Testing, which is now known as COVID Safety Checks. To assure students education is not interrupted we are going to utilize 3 testing options this year which are the following:

- **Routine COVID Safety Checks, formerly known as Pooled Testing** – Minimize disruption to learning by helping us catch potential spread of the virus before it starts. Each student administers the safety check on a weekly basis. Samples are collected at school in groups of 5-10 individuals. The samples are grouped together at school. Once the samples get to the lab, all the samples in the group are tested for COVID-19 together. In almost all cases, it will take less than 24 hours to receive safety check results. Students can continue to come to school while awaiting safety check results; they do not need to quarantine while awaiting results. If a safety check test is positive, the students in the group will take individual rapid tests to determine which student(s) in the group produced the positive test.
- **Test and Stay** – Allows students who have had close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19 while at school to stay in school if the student is not showing symptoms. Instead of needing to quarantine and miss school, these students will take a daily rapid test while they remain in school as long as they are not symptomatic. Students participate in test and stay for at least five days after they may have been exposed.

- **Symptomatic Testing** – Used when a student is showing symptoms of COVID-19 during school; students should not come to school if they are feeling sick while at home. Some symptoms of the virus look identical to other illnesses like the cold or flu, and this test tells us whether a symptomatic student has COVID-19 or not. This is a rapid test, and we receive the results of this test within 15 minutes. If a student has minimal symptoms and tests negative, they can remain in school.

If a student tests positive for COVID-19, they must quarantine at home for the CDC-recommended 10 days since symptoms appeared or 10 days since the positive test before returning to school. The student must also be without a fever for 24 hours.

The form to sign up for COVID Safety Checks can be found at [www.cic-health.com/consent/ma](http://www.cic-health.com/consent/ma). The more mitigating strategies we can utilize the greater our success rate will be in keeping students in school this year.

Thank you for your diligence in the battle against COVID, together we can get through the year uninterrupted!

Stay well,

*Dr. Marlene A. Dileo*  
Superintendent

*Jennifer Knight*  
School Nurse Leader